

50. (Not Amended Herein) A recorded article having a colored portion formed on a recording medium, the colored portion containing aggregates of fine particles, each of the fine particles having a coloring material thereon by adsorption in a monomolecular state, wherein at least one of the coloring material and the fine particles has penetrated into the inside of the recording medium.

52. (Not Amended Herein) A recorded article comprising a colored portion formed on a recording medium, wherein the colored portion comprises aggregates of fine particles, to which particles the coloring material is adsorbed in a monomolecular state, wherein each aggregate comprises fine particles agglomerated through the coloring material.

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments as well as the amendments submitted on January 8 and January 15, 2003, and the following remarks.

Claims 23-36, 39, 50 and 52 are pending in this application, with Claims 24-26, 33-36, 39, 50 and 52 being the independent claims. Claims 28, 30 and 31 are amended herein so as to depend from Claim 24 only, instead of being multiply

dependent. It is submitted that no new matter has been added by the amendments herein.

In the final Office Action dated October 10, 2002, Claims 25, 30-33, 36, 39 and 50-51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by EP 900,831 A2 (EP '831). Claims 23, 24, 26, 27, 34 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over EP '831. Claims 28 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over EP '831 in view of EP 776,950 A2 (EP '950). Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections as applied to the present claims.

In the present invention, as recited in Claim 24, the colored portion of the ink-jet recorded image comprises aggregates of fine particles, each of the fine particles having a coloring material thereon by adsorption in a monomolecular state. Accordingly, the coloring material is adsorbed onto fine particles in a monomolecular state, and the fine particles then aggregate. Because the fine particles aggregate rather than fuse, they remain in particle form in the colored portion.

In contrast, the fine particles disclosed by EP '831 are not in particle form after printing. As discussed in the Amendment submitted on January 8, 2003 and in the interview held on January 15, 2003, the fine particles in EP '831 "coalesce with and fused to one another to form a film including the colorant." (paragraph [0033]). In the Advisory Action dated January 22,

2003, the Examiner asserted that fine particles are still present even if they coalesce and fuse together. In Applicants' view, once fine particles coalesce with each other and fuse together, they no longer exist in particle form. Rather, the material that had been in particle form is in the form of a film. Thus, in EP '831, fine particles do not exist any more after printing. Accordingly, Applicants conclude that EP '831 does not teach or suggest the aforementioned features of the present invention.

Regarding the combination of EP '950 with EP '831, the Examiner stated that it would have been obvious to use anionic or cationic colorants and to use fine particles having a polarity which is opposite to that of the colorant. As discussed in the Amendment filed January 8, 2003, Applicants submit that there is nothing in EP '950 to motivate such a combination. Applicants therefore conclude that the combination of EP '831 and '950 would not result in the invention of Claim 28 or 29.

Applicants conclude that the cited references, whether taken alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the features of the present invention. Withdrawal of the rejections under Sections 102 and 103 is respectfully requested.

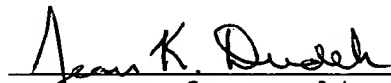
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention, as recited in independent Claims 24-26, 33-36, 39, 50 and 52, is patentably defined over the cited references. The dependent claims should also be deemed allowable, in their

own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

The present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Attorney for Applicants
Jean K. Dudek
Registration No. 30,938

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

28. (Amended) The ink-jet recorded image according to [any one of Claims 23 to 27] Claim 24, wherein the coloring material is anionic or cationic, and the fine particles have a polarity opposite to the coloring material.

30. (Amended) The ink-jet recorded image according to [any one of Claims 23 to 27] Claim 24, wherein the average particle diameter of the fine particles is within a range of from 0.005 to 1 μm .

31. (Amended) The ink-jet recorded image according to [any one of Claims 23 to 27] Claim 24, wherein the image is of plural colors.